

THE GREY PANTHER

Newsletter of the Emeritus and Retired Faculty of Chapman University



News from the Working Group

The members of the Working Group of the Retired and Emeritus Faculty Association of Chapman University are: Jay Boylan, Penny Bryan, Virginia Carson, Jeff Cogan, Tom Hall, Claudia Horn, John Koshak, Joe Matthews, Judy Montgomery, Karl Reitz, Suzanne Soo-Hoo, Anita Storck, and Heather Terjung. We welcome you reaching out to us with questions, concerns, ideas.

Agenda Items: Before the Covid pandemic, the Working Group met six times a year in person and now we discuss Association business by e-mail. Previously, items on our agenda included event planning, the Grey Panther newsletter, and most recently focused on two main issues, retired and emeriti faculty privileges and service by our Association to the University.

Retired and Emeritus Faculty privileges: We found in talking with each other and hearing from various retired and emeriti faculty that when a faculty member retires, retirement privileges are not uniformly communicated across the board to each group. We found that perks like library privileges, parking, access to office space and a phone, or computer and e-mail privileges are, at times, unevenly applied to each person. We formed a sub-committee to look into the issue and to work with the administration, so that, going forward, each retired

Chapman Summer 2020

2020 has not been a kind year for institutions of higher learning. With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic all colleges and universities switched to distance learning in the middle of the 2019-2020 school year. Students who had to leave their dorm rooms wanted their money back. Other students who had paid substantial tuition sued their institutions because distance learning was not what had been their expectation. Then came the uncertainty of whether universities would be able to return to in-person learning in the fall. Finally, even with the possibility of reopening in-person learning, restrictions on the number of students in dorms and classrooms meant that things would be far from normal. Even under the best of all possibilities, expected revenue would be far short of what would have been under normal circumstances. Some writers have questioned whether many colleges and universities would be able to survive. Even those that survive beyond the pandemic will probably have to revise their way of doing business. Are the days of well appointed dorms, gourmet cafeterias, shiny new buildings, and well equipped gyms a thing of the past? Will students realize that real learning can take place outside a country club environment?

Chapman is not immune to these changes. It faced uncertainty about the possibility of reopening with constantly changing guidelines from authorities. As a result, after having developed extensive plans and

continued next page

and emeritus faculty is given clear information on what privileges, or not, they can expect in retirement, and for how long. Section F of the current online edition of the Faculty Manual, dated effective August 1, 2016, page 13, contains language about emeriti faculty privileges but does not list length of time of the privileges and also does not list any privileges, if any, for retired faculty without emeritus status.

Service to the University: We also discussed how our Association can be relevant to the University. Several of our members informed us that a percentage of Chapman students experience food insecurity. Some of our members volunteered to work with the campus to investigate how we can donate to the Student Food Pantry. We recently heard from the campus that because of the current situation of remote learning that the Food Pantry is on hold for now. We plan on pursuing this service opportunity once students are on campus in greater numbers again.

Other suggestions of service were assisting with recruitment of new students and identifying a charity so that folks attending the annual holiday party would be able to contribute in the appropriate manner.

Events: Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we regret that our Fall luncheon and talk and our annual holiday party are cancelled for 2020.

Membership: When we hear that a faculty is planning to retire or has retired, we send out an invitation to join the Association. For legal reasons, the campus is not able to notify us about retirements, so we rely on word of mouth to find out who is retiring.

From the Editor

We have had to deal in our own way with the pandemic. This edition contains articles and stories that tell of our members lives in the Time of Covid to paraphrase Gabriel Garcia Márquez. We also cover some big stories regarding Chapman. Please send comments and or submissions to Karl Reitz at kpreitz@gmail.com

protocols for reopening, the decision was made that the semester would begin entirely on-line with the exception of some of the programs in Allied Health. With projections of serious drops in revenue, the University twice cut its budget. Senior administrators took a ten percent pay cut and froze hiring. The second round meant that matching 401k contributions would not be made and staff that were not needed in the face of distance learning would be laid off. In order to keep students from leaving, substantial increases in tuition discounts have also been made. Those of us who were around in the late seventies remember when SC Edison was only hours away from turning the power off on campus. Not just administrators but everyone was given a ten percent pay cut. Chapman survived that difficult time and will do so again. But there may be more changes coming.

Eastman Op-Ed Criticized

In August, John Eastman a law professor of the Fowler School of Law, published an op-ed in Newsweek questioning Kamala Harris' eligibility to be President of the United States. Criticism followed swiftly with even Newsweek apologizing for publishing the piece. In any case, virtually all news outlets prominently included Chapman in their headlines. Since the piece was roundly condemned as pandering to a racist side of our society, it placed Chapman in a rather negative light. As a result many in the Chapman community were outraged. Over three hundred people signed a petition on change.org condemning the piece and calling on President Struppa to repudiate the article.

As a result President Struppa declined to criticize Eastman, arguing that doing so would send the wrong message of stifling free speech and academic freedom. He further commented on his strong commitment to diversity at the university and detailed the number of steps that had been taken that increased diversity and supported minority students with plans to do more in the future. Condemnation of Eastman's op-ed came from an important Chapman voice when Wylie Aitken, the chair of the Board of Trustees wrote a highly critical opinion in the online publication the Voice of OC.

The Kingdom, by Earl Babbie (published by *Smashwords*, as an e-book, 5 July 2020)
reviewed by Thomas Hall

The Kingdom is identified by the publisher as “historical fiction”. One would think such a bold oxymoron would equip the reader for bizarre bible stories with such oddities as Jesus with a different name, married to Mary Magdalene (who is a disciple). Or St. Peter, who is an ambitious bully, or Judas who actually is St. Thomas, who is really Jesus’s twin brother, who betrays the Christ through bumbling, not on purpose. These departures from Sunday school, and many others involving really fluid name re-assignment, kept me off balance, but in the long run it was entertaining and interesting.

What I think gave thrust for this book was the translation by Marv Meyer of an old treatise, found in Egypt, widely thought to be the work of St. Thomas. Called *The Gospel of Thomas*, the translation is available in the Chapman Library, but I have not browsed it, as I’m not campus cleared. Evidently when Earl Babbie read *The Gospel of Thomas*, years ago, he thought I’ll write something showing what it would be like if the Thomas Gospel were true. The result is *The Kingdom*, in two parts, one featuring Jesus and Thomas, and a second part set in a meeting taking place in Carthage, in the late fourth century. The central character is St. Jerome, without his faithful thorn-out-of-the-paw lion.

The first section, *Galilee*, consists of retelling Bible stories and presenting religious concepts *a la Thomas* and the new testament. The second part, *Carthage*, is more original fiction, and deals with the function of the meeting and the choosing of what makes up the Bible as we know it. Earl Babbie’s writing style is crystal clear, uncluttered, efficient and easy, easy reading. But it’s certainly not dull, just good use of language. If crafting textbooks has shown him how to write, he should now put his skill to work on pure fiction.

When Things Change, What Stays the Same?

Suzanne SooHoo, Orange, 10 April, 2020

My colleague and I presented a paper together at the American Educational Research Association conference two years ago. Our study asked, ‘When things change, what stays the same?’ The question becomes more relevant than ever during the Covid-19 pandemic as we think about our futures as educators. What essential learnings will survive or risk extinction as a result of our new normal of physical distancing? What challenges am I facing will not be temporary accommodations but permanent fixtures in the modern landscape of learning? How will my role change and my teaching redirected?

Relational literacy

In my Freirean classroom, cultivating relational literacy is an intentional attempt to humanize our classroom experiences. Beyond sharing stories about schooling, cultures, histories, one also learns to hug: to give a hug and to receive a hug. At the end of the semester, we culminate our time together with a group hug. Student evaluations have reported sentiments of appreciation e.g., ‘I love it when I hug someone, and just when I’m about to let go, they hug me even tighter’ (Heartfelt Love and Life Quotes 2020). Will the art form of hugging survive post Covid-19?

Transitioning online

My calendar is now punctuated with Zoom meetings: Zoom classes, Zoom meetings, Zoom family sessions, Zoom telehealth sessions, etc. The novelty of wearing bedroom slippers to the Zoom meeting soon wears out as my body that is suffering from quarantine fatigue is aching to bolt out of the desk chair. Like in class, I scan the portrait gallery for the one face with the reassuring smile, the one face that re-energizes me, the face that anchors me. It’s a digitalized, pixelated version of a face. I can’t feel the accompanying human spirit. But it’s better than people

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sending their avatars to class (as I suddenly catapult mentally to a dystopian future).

Who are my Students?

Who is in the Zoom room with my students? Is that Angie's boyfriend? Is Kevin's mother joining our class for the evening? Who are those little kids running back and forth in the background of Lilia's living room? Charlotte is holding a cat. Thank heavens this is a virtual class session, I'm allergic to cats. Who am I speaking to in tonight's class?

Where do these new 'students', who are not officially on my class roster, fit in?

Do they get to enjoy participating in the privilege of a Ph.D. seminar for the rest of the semester? What is the fate of our beginning- of- the -semester Vegas rule – 'What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas.'? Our agreement to maintain the confidentiality of our stories within classroom walls collapses.

Who else is in the zoom room that is not visible?

Fox News journalists? White nationalists, who have graffitied our campus this past year? Will I see my words out of context published in tomorrow's newspaper? I am suddenly aware that I am educating Ph.D. students with friends and neighbors. My talks and my pedagogy are on public display. I am now more mindful than before of how my words, out of context, can be misunderstood. I find myself involuntarily recasted from professor to public intellectual.



When things change, what stays the same?
Seemingly Nothing.

Grey Panther Blurp

Richard Turner

I begin each day with a two-mile walk in the morning. In early May I got tired of walking around my own neighborhood in downtown Orange. I looked for other areas for my daily walk and found the Eichler tracts to be inspiring alternatives. The Eichler tracts are districts of modernist homes here in Orange built in fifties and sixties by the progressive developer Joseph Eichler. I was familiar with the Fairmeadow tract because Jane and Cameron Sinclair had a home there, but I hadn't visited the other two tracts despite the fact that I have lived in Orange for fifty years and am a fan of modernist architecture. It took the pandemic lockdown to get me out to see them. The combination of subtle colors of the architecture – greys, creamy whites and tans – and the drought-tolerant landscaping that featured gravel, concrete block and desert plants, inspired a series of sculptures that combine painted concrete block with stones arranged with a modernist aesthetic in mind. These Eichler Tract Studies are on my newly updated website, turnerprojects.com under the Viewing Stone Project heading.

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These sculptures, along with all the work in the Viewing Stone Project, are part of my longstanding interest in what are called viewing stones, scholar's rocks or suiseki, that dates back to the 1990s and the classes I taught at Chapman in the arts of Asia. My new book, *Contemporary Viewing Stone Display*, which came out in July, is an outgrowth of this studio work. For the past two years I have been working with two friends on a book about the collection and display of stones, an instinct that is widespread and deeply rooted in the human psyche. Our book proposes an engagement with stones that is both informed by tradition and open to experiment. The book begins with an authoritative history of stone appreciation in China and Japan by Thomas S. Elias. An essay by Paul A. Harris sets stone appreciation in the context of our conflicted relationship with planet Earth. In the two subsequent chapters, I apply familiar principles of design to the display of stones and companion objects and introduce readers to the political dimensions of display and the use of common materials and everyday objects in arrangements. The book concludes with a gallery of contemporary displays by collectors from around the world. Copies of *Contemporary Viewing Stone Display* are available at www.vsana.org.

Pains and Joys in Covid Times

Atanas Radenski

I am talking with my mother on Messenger.

"I've grown too old," she says. "I never thought I will live to be 97, and then some."

"You look younger for your age," I encourage her. "No one will give you more than 85."

"Really?" she smiles, hopeful. "So young?!"

I nod in response and smile, too.

I watch her through the window, seated in her wheelchair and staring at her Samsung tablet, as we video-chat. From time to time, she remembers that I am outside, in the patio, raises her head, looks at me, and smiles once more.

With my wife, we have arrived a week ago in Eugene, Oregon, and we are quarantined in an RV next to our daughter's big family house. My mother has lived with them for 20 years now, taking as much care as she could of her three great-grandchildren and the household.

My mother has always wanted to be useful, and despite her aging, she still finds ways to continue being useful. She takes the laundry out of the big drier and folds it. She loads and unloads the dishwasher. She feeds the dogs. Sometimes, she even secretly does chores that she is actually asked not to do. And for the rest of the time, she takes care of herself, does flexibility exercises, and reads e-books.

Every time I have visited Eugene, I have loaded tons of fresh books on her tablet. And every time I have tried to teach her Messenger, I have failed. Not this time. This time, she realizes I certainly must not get inside the house, and motivated all of a sudden, she learns to video-chat. It does not come easy, but she persists and – Voila! - she is online, video-chatting with her granddaughters in Washington and Canada. She is even browsing Facebook pictures and news!

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Do you know what strikes me most in her story? It is not that she is online at the age of 97. It is not that she manages to use and enjoy a device that does not understand Bulgarian, the only language she knows. It strikes me that if Covid were not around, she would have never learned Messenger! The limitations that Covid imposed on the two of us energized her to succeed where she always failed before.

And it was Covid that forced my wife and me to minimize contacts with humans and therefore drive roads less traveled in our trip from Orange to Eugene. Along the 395, we discovered deserted yet unforgettably charming camping spots in national forests and on BLM land. We discovered camping and hiking spots that we would have never looked for if it were not for the pandemic.

A few months ago, still in Orange, we had to cancel our daily promenades because of virus huffing and puffing runners that could not be avoided in our neighborhood even at night. So, we bought a rowing machine. Having a rowing machine at home is like living full time in a gym: you can always sit in it, turn rhythmic YouTube music on, and practice. And it turned out, we exercise much more than before!

Last November, I had my second novel, titled “The Rescuer”, published in Sofia, in Bulgarian. The novel is about the life of a search-and-rescue volunteer, a young woman, and about the lives of a few folks rescued by her.

Yes, I wanted very much to rewrite my novel in English, as soon as I could, but this is a daunting task, you know, because I am not a native English speaker. I thought it would take me years to do it. Besides, in early 2020, my wife and I had some travel already booked: a couple of trips to Bulgaria, a trip to Italy, a trip to Louisiana, remote camping in the Grand Canyon, and those already paid for trips alone would have been enough to distract me from doing much of the actual translation.

Then Covid spread its shadow over our lives, and all bookings had to be canceled. We were concerned with the virus and decided to stay strictly home, with the only exception of occasionally driving the backroads and camping in the wilderness.

Just staying home would have been boring, but then I had this novel translation to do. So, I am doing it. Every day is very busy, but the English draft seems to be coming along. It is not easy; it is a lot of work for a non-native English speaker like me, and I can only hope that my translation would be of acceptable quality for future beta-readers and professional editors. But I will get it done, yes, I will, and then I will see what.

I suspect this translation would have never occurred if it were not for Covid to lock me home and make me work, day after day, for weeks and months. Now I imagine that I will complete it about the time a vaccine is available and our lives are back to normal, and I smile, happy at least for a moment.